

# THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY



## Piece of Atlantic City history dies

Barbara Hudgins was the city's first black councilwoman. **A3**

### WALL AFTER ALL?

Trump says he will declare national emergency if he can't get border wall funding from Congress. **C1**

Friday, January 11, 2019 // Serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland & southern Ocean counties // PressofAtlanticCity.com // Vol. MMXIX, No. 11

\$1.50

# Middle Twp. school officials probe racist post

**CLAIRE LOWE**  
Staff Writer

**MIDDLE TOWNSHIP** — Two girls from Middle Township High School are being investigated after sharing a social media post containing racist language. Superintendent David Salvo, reached by phone

Thursday, said he could not comment further on the details of the investigation. Salvo said he could not say what disciplinary action was taken against the students except that it was being handled appropriately. According to a Facebook post from Salvo on Thursday morning, the district became

aware of the situation Wednesday. They said the student's post on social media contained "a very inappropriate image which contained clearly offensive racist language." The photo shows a white student smiling and posing, crouched over a racial epithet spray painted on a wooden

platform, which Salvo said was located in Avalon. "As a school district and community, we do not condone or accept such language or offensive behavior," Salvo wrote. Avalon Police Chief Jeff Christopher confirmed the incident occurred at a private property in the borough.

"Late last night, we were contacted by the Middle Township Police Department investigating an incident. MTPD informed us that two juveniles had posted a picture on social media of themselves with a racial slur spray painted in the background,"

See **RACIST**, A4

## Lopez gets 30 years in Blanco murder

**MOLLY BILINSKI**  
Staff Writer

**MAYS LANDING** — "Although my mom taught me to not carry hate in my heart and she believed in forgiveness, I will never, never forgive this monster and I will always hate him as long as I live," Ana Blanco said Thursday afternoon during the sentencing of the man who killed her mother, Bessy Blanco.

Jose B. Lopez, 53, of Ventnor, was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the murder of his ex-girlfriend, 54-year-old Blanco, who was found stabbed to death inside her home on North Harrisburg Avenue in Atlantic City on Feb. 18, 2017.

Lopez was also sentenced to 20 years for the attempted murder of Blanco's friend, Mark Richart, who was found stabbed on the street outside the home but survived the incident.

See **LOPEZ**, A2

### BUENA WRESTLING

## Attorney criticizes 'hair fixation'

**MICHAEL MCGARRY**  
Staff Writer

The attorney for a 16-year-old Buena Regional High School wrestler forced to cut his dreadlocks or forfeit a match last month wants the state to investigate "an unrelenting fixation" on the wrestler's hair.

Dominic Speciali, the attorney for junior wrestler Andrew Johnson, said Wednesday's match between Buena and Absegami was postponed after a referee said Johnson would not be able to compete without covering for his hair.

Buena school officials could not be reached for comment on why Wednesday's match was canceled.

See **JOHNSON**, A2



# UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

## Ocean Resort acquired by outside firm; Deifik to retain small share

**DAVID DANZIS**  
Staff Writer

**ATLANTIC CITY** — Ocean Resort Casino will remain open and the property's nearly 3,000 jobs are safe for now following an announcement Thursday that the megaresort was changing hands after six months of operation.

After purchasing the \$2.4 billion casino hotel in January 2018 for \$229 million, Bruce Deifik, the current owner, will retain a non-controlling ownership interest but an outside company will assume majority ownership. Deifik did not identify the new company.

The change comes amid six months of lagging game revenues, a \$10 million lawsuit by a former employee and several other pending legal issues including construction liens.

"It has been truly an honor for myself and my family to have taken

this property, opened its doors and brought back the players, the families, the convention guests and the sports betting enthusiasts," Deifik told The Associated Press. "My family and I want to thank the 3,000-plus employees at Ocean for their tireless work to bring our property to life and put it on track to become the best gaming property in New Jersey. If approved and closed, this next round of investment into Ocean will put this property on an exciting path to growth."

The Boardwalk property formerly known as Revel Casino Hotel reopened to the public June 27, along with Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City. The two casinos contributed to a historic summer in the seaside resort and were heralded as key players in Atlantic City's resurgence.

The new controlling entity plans to use about \$70 million in capital to open a buffet, additional suites and rooms, and investments on

See **OCEAN**, A2

### ONLINE

Ocean Resort visitors react to Thursday's news in a video at **PressofAC.com**. Plus, check out galleries and past stories about the property.

PRESS ARCHIVES

**WIND CALMS**  
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See your South Jersey forecast on **C6**.

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